NEON

# I, TONYA

**A FILM BY CRAIG GILLESPIE**

**Written by Steven Rogers**

**Starring Margot Robbie, Allison Janney, Sebastian Stan,**
**Julianne Nicholson, Paul Walter Hauser & Bobby Cannavale**

**Run Time: 120 minutes**
**Rating: R**

## FESTIVALS:

Toronto International Film Festival
Closing Night of Hamptons Film Festival
Mill Valley Film Festival
Chicago Film Festival
New Orleans Film Festival
Opening Night of Philadelphia Film Festival
Middleburg Film Festival
Napa Valley Film Festival
Closing Night Austin Film Festival
Savannah Film Festival
Hawaii International Film Festival
AFI Festival
Napa Valley Film Festival
Closing Night Denver Film Festival
Houston Cinema Arts Festival
Key West Film Festival

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**SYNOPSIS**

Based on the unbelievable, but true events, I, TONYA is a darkly comedic tale of American figure skater, Tonya Harding, and one of the most sensational scandals in sports history. Though Harding was the first American woman to complete a triple axel in competition, her legacy was forever defined by her association with an infamous, ill-conceived, and even more poorly executed attack on fellow Olympic competitor Nancy Kerrigan. Featuring an iconic turn by Margot Robbie as the fiery Harding, a mustachioed Sebastian Stan as her impetuous ex-husband Jeff Gillooly, and a tour-de-force performance from Allison Janney as her acid-tongued mother, LaVona Golden, Craig Gillespie's I, TONYA is an absurd, irreverent, and piercing portrayal of Harding's life and career in all of its unchecked—and checkered—glory.

## ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

In 1991, Tonya Harding won the U.S. Figure Skating Championship, becoming the first woman to complete a triple axel in competition. Three years later she was embroiled in one of the biggest sports-related scandals in history, receiving a lifetime ban from the U.S. Figure Skating Association following the notorious attack on rival skater Nancy Kerrigan at the U.S. Nationals in Detroit, as orchestrated by Harding's ex-husband Jeff Gillooly and his bumbling associates, including one-time Harding bodyguard Shawn Eckardt.

Harding's saga helped usher in the 24-hour cable-news cycle, defining its era with lurid scandals from the worlds of sports, entertainment and politics, breathlessly detailed on networks like CNN and the tabloid news programs "Hard Copy" and "A Current Affair."

But who was Tonya Harding, exactly? What did she know about the attack on Nancy Kerrigan, and when did she know it? A truly gifted athlete who hailed from the wrong side of the tracks in the Pacific Northwest, where she grew up in an abusive home, she was nobody's vision of the cookie-cutter figure skater as epitomized by Kerrigan. But was she the cold-hearted monster the media made her out to be?

In the darkly comic I, TONYA director Craig Gillespie (*Lars and the Real Girl*), writer Steven Rogers (*Love the Coopers*) and producer-star Margot Robbie (*Suicide Squad, The Wolf of Wall Street*) track Harding from age 4 to 44, looking back on her famous fall from grace through the fictionalized prism of its central figures, including Harding (Robbie) and Gillooly (Sebastian Stan), Eckardt (Paul Walter Hauser) and the unforgettable LaVona Golden (Allison Janney), Tonya's tough-as-nails mother who was instrumental in shaping her skating career, and life.

"Tonya's story was the first big media scandal of the 24-hour news cycle, right before the O.J. Simpson verdicts changed the media landscape forever," says Robbie. "The media sensationalized the story, pitting Nancy and Tonya against each other in a girl-fight when in fact they were both great athletes. That something so brutal could happen in the graceful figure-skating world seemed so contradictory. And Tonya herself was an anomaly, this powerhouse athlete in a sport where the perception was to

be dainty and petite. People had strong feelings for her — they either loved her or hated her — and became addicted to her story like we're addicted to reality TV today."

A story of resilience and perseverance that deftly intermingles black comedy, drama, sports spectacle, and subterfuge, I, TONYA offers multiple perspectives on a story that didn't offer easy outcomes or solutions, finding empathy and nuance in what many followers of the scandal sought to dismiss as "deplorable." Through its unique take on the Harding scandal, viewers come to develop their own theory of what *really* happened.

## ABOUT THE STORY

Screenwriter and Producer Steven Rogers (*Stepmom, Kate and Leopold*) began thinking about I, TONYA in its nascent stage after he watched "The Price of Gold," an episode of ESPN's *30 for 30* documentary series highlighting interesting people and events in sports history. "There were these ideas in the episode that were barely touched on and interested me about Tonya's story," says Rogers. "Specifically the idea that media and people change the narrative to control the stories we read and hear about." He began to shape his script around interviews between Harding and Gillooly, which came to frame his story. "I could present all the different sides of the story and let audiences decide what they believed or didn't," adds Rogers.

In the earliest stages of the project he obtained the life rights to Harding and flew to Portland, where he interviewed her and her estranged former husband in middle age, finding their stories to be wildly contradictory. Knowing he had material for a feature-length script, he began researching footage on the Internet, finding verbatim dialogue he later used in his script, including interview footage of Shawn Eckardt, and rare footage of LaVona Harding, Tonya's mother.

Rogers was also intrigued that Gillooly had never shared his point of view on what came to be known as "The Incident," the clubbing of Nancy Kerrigan at the U.S. Nationals in Detroit, which Gillooly himself orchestrated. Despite having commented in the '90s on tabloid news programs, his motives until now remained vague. "I don't know why he told me the things he did, but I'm glad," says Rogers. "I knew I had a movie."

While I, TONYA showcases the famous clubbing incident that turned Tonya Harding into a household name, Rogers script focuses more on the homegrown aspect of the story — where she came from, and the forces and people who shaped her, including her mother. "You think going into the story that you're seeing a movie about that famous incident," says Allison Janney, who plays LaVona Harding in the movie. "But it really becomes a story about a young girl's circumstances, and what she's brought

up in. These events come to explain who she is and why she comes to find herself in the situations she did."

Janney had a personal connection to the project before she was even cast — indeed, the role of LaVona was written specifically for her from the project's inception. Rogers and Janney attended acting school at the Neighborhood Playhouse together in New York City, and remain close friends. Rogers has written several parts for the award-winning stage and screen actress, but until I, TONYA, she had never been cast in one of his produced scripts. She was also a figure skater in her younger life, abandoning the sport after an accident and taking up acting instead. "I left the skating world, but never left it in my heart," says Janney. "So I was very aware of who Tonya and Nancy were. Watching that story unfold, I'll never forget it."

After reading Rogers' script, Janney came to see the Harding story as much more than a sports scandal and an athlete's ensuing fall from grace — it was also a profound mother and daughter story with a complex psychological dynamic. "LaVona raised Tonya with an iron fist and knew her daughter did better on ice if she was angry or was told she couldn't do something," says Janney. "She was manipulating her to get her to do her best. From her own perspective, she was a good mom. But she also wanted to get both of them out of their circumstances. Through Tonya, she saw endorsement deals and an escape."

Riffing on *I, Claudius* — the title of Robert Graves' infamous novel of the Roman Empire — and slyly winking at the courtroom oath of "I swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth," Rogers' screenplay also became a story about cultivating image, framed by present-day interviews in which key subjects in the affair (including Tonya, Jeff, LaVona and Shawn Eckardt) put on their best face in an attempt to get at the heart of the confounding story that defined a generation. Far from a warts-and-all depiction of losers stumbling towards disgrace, I, TONYA locates empathy in its characters' struggles.

Upon its completion, the script began circulating in Hollywood, eventually appearing on the 2016 Black List and placing number one on the Hit List,

The Tracking Board's influential compendium of the year's most highly regarded spec scripts. After months of industry heat, it caught the attention of actress-producer Margot Robbie's company LuckyChap who sought it out as a starring vehicle for the in-demand star, in keeping with the company's mission to develop and produce projects with a strong female perspective. Robbie, Ackerley and producing partner Bryan Unkeless warmed to Rogers' script on numerous levels, determined to find the right director who could bring the project to life.

Ironically, Robbie was unfamiliar with the Harding/Kerrigan story, initially believing I, TONYA to be a fictional story. She grew up in Australia without much television in her household and was only four years old in the mid-1990s when the scandal played out. "When I first read the script I thought how creative the writer was, coming up with this crazy character who was somehow involved with this outrageous incident in the figure skating world," says Robbie. "But even after I found out it was a true story, I felt like I could stay impartial because I didn't have any preconceived notions about who these people were."

Director Craig Gillespie (*Lars and the Real Girl*) was sent the script with an indication that Robbie was attached to star and produce. Having forged his career testing the boundaries between comedy and drama in his award-winning TV commercials as well as the pilot episode of Diablo Cody's "United States of Tara," Gillespie marveled at Rogers' reshaping of the Harding affair into a black comedy-drama. "The story was so masterfully told, with such a beautiful balance of emotion and humor, and a completely unconventional structure that was both intimidating and exhilarating," says Gillespie. "It was a very tricky tone, but I thought it was beautifully suited to Margot. The dance I'd seen her do in previous work between humor, vulnerability and strength were all attributes that I thought embodied Tonya's world perfectly."

What struck Gillespie the most about the story was the fact that Harding was at heart a very young girl who had the whole world bearing down on her at the height of her struggles. He quickly understood the stakes of the script, something that impressed both Robbie and her LuckyChap co-producer Bryan Unkeless. "You really come to empathize with Tonya," says

Unkeless. "But Craig took things a step further and created the same empathy for the other characters in her orbit. Instead of making them punch lines, he made them real people." Adds Robbie: "The script adopts such a specific tone. A lot of directors understood the humor, but we never knew if they were going to take it too far. Craig understood dysfunctional relationships and how to handle the violence without taking it too far, because you don't want to make a joke out of domestic abuse. You can see in his other work how he handles his characters so genuinely — it never feels like he's judging them or making fun of them. That was the key to our film."

**BECOMING TONYA**

After Gillespie signed on to direct, Robbie set about transforming herself into Tonya Harding at the peak of her career in the late '80s and early '90s. She pored through hours of YouTube and ESPN footage, doing a deep dive into the well documented Kerrigan "incident" that arrived late in Harding's figure skating career at the same time she tried to piece together Harding's hardscrabble youth in the Pacific Northwest.

The incident happened during a time when cameras were becoming more and more prevalent in daily life, making footage of Harding at her prime both widespread and easily accessible. ESPN's "The Price of Gold" helped Robbie contextualize Harding's story, and footage from training sessions prior to the Lillehammer Olympics captured word for word what coaches were telling Tonya moments before she went on the ice. "There were many instances where we could replicate the dialogue meticulously, moment to moment," says Robbie. "There were also thousands of images of Tonya we found online, which inspired Craig's vision and many moments aesthetically. I was on YouTube almost every second of this shoot."

But it was a documentary made in the mid-1980s that was the biggest boon for Robbie's research. At age 15, as her figure-skating career was taking shape on the regional level, a Yale college student reached out to Harding, asking to film her daily life for a class project. This footage allowed Robbie to watch Tonya Harding take shape as both young adult and professional figure skater. She also observed the volatile interactions with her mother LaVona, which were a crucial aspect of Rogers' script. "You need to see what happens to someone as a kid in order to understand why they do what they do later in life," says Robbie.

Robbie and Gillespie also flew to Portland to meet Harding, who was then a 44-year-old who had been mostly out of the limelight for a decade, having bid farewell to her skating career at the end of the 1990s — and subsequent boxing career in the decade that followed. "I was really excited to meet her but I knew it wasn't going to be what I expected," says Robbie. "She's a tough woman who has put up with a lot. She was a true athlete, and defied all the odds. The fact that she made it to the level she did with

the upbringing she had is simply amazing. She's resilient, and keeps on going."

I, TONYA filmed in Atlanta over 30 days, providing little time for Robbie to undergo an expansive physical transformation between Harding's teenage years, and the adult years that frame the story. The actress worked closely with costume designer Jennifer Johnson, hair stylist Mary Everett and makeup artist Deborah La Mia Denaver, who employed shading techniques around Robbie's chin, jawline and cheeks to reshape her face and make her look more like Harding. Prosthetic artist Vincent Van Dyke employed subtle touches to transform Robbie into Harding in her forties. For the skating scenes, some of which involved stunt doubles, Robbie worked with a movement coach to make her more comfortable on the ice and improve her physicality.

## BECOMING LAVONA

While Robbie had hundreds of hours of research at her disposal, co-star Allison Janney had very little to work with in bringing LaVona Harding to life. Janney did not have the luxury of meeting LaVona, though she and Rogers attempted to contact her in the earliest stages of production. Aside from an interview on "The Montel Williams Show" from the 1990s, in which LaVona passed out during the taping, scant footage of the woman was available online, and much of it fleeting. "Steven and I both used our artistic license with this character," says Janney. "Most of what we came to know about LaVona was through Tonya. I knew she was a very articulate woman, highly intelligent, obviously very damaged, but that was all I really had to go on."

Like Robbie, Janney came to rely mostly on the Yale student's documentary to elicit clues as to LaVona's complex and often ferocious personality. "That documentary helped me enormously, just being able to see Tonya talk to her mother on the phone," says Janney. "It wasn't possible to hear what LaVona was saying but simply being able to see Tonya's reaction to her mother helped me shape my character."

For her physical transformation into LaVona, Janney relied on the scant footage of LaVona and the gifts of the hair, makeup and wardrobe departments, who worked together to create an unforgettable sartorial presence in the film, including wig, fur coat and pet parakeet. "She's got this unique hairstyle, which isn't one most of us would choose for ourselves," says Janney. "We just took everything we saw from the Yale student's documentary, including the fur coat and the parakeet, and incorporated it into the interview scene after the fact, talking about what happened around the time of the Lillehammer Olympics."

The parakeet was named Little Man, and Janney worried on set that the bird would steal her thunder during a crucial scene. "You never act with animals, they always upstage you," says Janney. "I didn't have any time to bond with the bird, but I loved him instantly. His handler helped him onto my finger and suddenly he was on my fur coat trying to sip out of my drink. He was nipping at my ear as I was trying to deliver my lines. It was magic."

## CREATING EMPATHY

Both Robbie and Janney went to great lengths during preparation and filming not to make their characters into caricatures, opting instead to emphasize their human qualities in addition to showing the more flawed aspect of their characters — in Tonya's case, her short temper before competition judges and in LaVona's case, the physical, verbal and emotional abuse which came to fuel Tonya in both her marriage to Jeff Gillooly and her skating career.

While it's easy to dismiss LaVona Harding as a monster — in one scene, she spontaneously kicks a young Tonya out of her seat at the kitchen table — Janney saw beyond the ferocity toward a kind of tough love employed to get them out of their working-class constraints. "I didn't know if it was possible to not make LaVona into a monster, but I knew that she saw something in her daughter that was a way out for both of them," says Janney. "LaVona knew how to motivate her daughter by humiliating her — I think that's where you can see the humanity in her actions. She wanted something better for her daughter, and saw her messing up at every turn by not keeping her eyes on the prize. LaVona didn't have the opportunities Tonya had, but she knew the importance of having someone fight for you, and make you tough."

## ROUNDING OUT THE CAST

With Robbie and Janney attached early on in pre-production, casting firmed up after Gillespie came on board as director. The most difficult role to cast was Jeff Gillooly, Harding's husband and manager. Hundreds of actors auditioned for the part, but Sebastian Stan (*The Martian*), who was coming off of Marvel's *Captain America* trilogy, in which he played Bucky Barnes, impressed producers with his nuanced and unpredictable take on what could have easily been a bumbling idiot. "Every decision he makes surprises you," says producer Tom Ackerley (*Terminal*). "He takes on the role of Jeff in a way that humanizes him, and brings an authentic sensitivity to his portrayal that's critical." Adds Steven Rogers: "There is no caricature in Sebastian's performance — he's dead honest as Jeff Gillooly and does an exceptional job showing where this guy was coming from, and how he ended up in such a surreal situation."

Stan, who auditioned twice for the role of Gillooly, warmed to the script's tragicomic dimensions and humane depictions of key characters and their concerns. At its heart, he saw I, TONYA as a love story about a volatile relationship. "This was two people being in love in unusual circumstances that they were not prepared for, coming from backgrounds that were not great," says Stan. "Her upbringing influenced a lot of her behavior and how she turned out — but so did Jeff Gillooly. At the end of the day, it's about crazy love."

To prepare for the role, Stan traveled to Portland to meet with Gillooly on two occasions prior to production, discovering someone who was almost the opposite of what he expected. "Deep down he's a very simple kind of guy who found himself way over his head in terms of the situation he wound up in," says Stan. "He handled himself poorly — as all the main characters in the story did — but I think the media helped create a much bigger persona than is really there."

Like his co-star Sebastian Stan, Paul Walter Hauser, best known for his recurring role on the Mixed Martial Arts TV drama "Kingdom," had never before played a character based on real life, in this case the grandiose Shawn Eckardt, Gillooly's close friend and a one-time bodyguard to Tonya

Harding who helped orchestrate the hit on Nancy Kerrigan through a pair of bumbling intermediaries. "He was the kind of guy who grew up with a non-stop cycle of shoot-'em-up movies, which created in his mind this vision of what a man should be," says Hauser. "He saw himself as a spy — when really he was just a guy living out of his parents' basement dreaming of bigger things. His relationship to Tonya was actually very minimal. I don't think anyone ever took him seriously as some sort of mastermind who could organize an event of this magnitude, but he did."

Like his co-stars, Hauser turned to ample YouTube footage of the Harding scandal and its aftermath to shape his character, delving into his psychology by meeting with people who knew Eckardt, including a former bible college pastor in Portland who ultimately passed information to the F.B.I. after Shawn bragged repeatedly to people at the college about orchestrating the Kerrigan clubbing. (Eckardt died in 2007 at age 40, after having his name legally changed to Brian Griffin). "My main research was picking apart what this character really wanted in life," says Hauser. "He wanted to be taken seriously. He wanted to be that daredevil figure he devoured in movies and books."

Bringing a cool detachment to the role of Diane Rawlinson — the Portland-based coach who began training Harding as a young child, watching her blossom into an Olympic superstar before burning out in her twenties — is Julianne Nicholson (*Black Mass, August: Osage County*). Quiet, calm and observant, Nicholson's Rawlinson is one of the rare characters in I, TONYA who *isn't* larger than life. "We needed an exceptional actress to pull off what Julianne achieves," says Robbie. "What she does with Diane that's amazing is to play the part of everyone who was watching this saga unfold," says Robbie. "How often do we stand by and see something bad happening without knowing if it's our place to do something about it? Diane was in a tricky spot — she was a maternal figure to Tonya, but Tonya isn't her child."

## CREATING THE TRIPLE AXEL

For a story that moves from Portland, Oregon to Lillehammer, Norway — but was filmed almost exclusively in Atlanta — I, TONYA was not without its logistical challenges. Chief among them were the gripping skating sequences that bring action, suspense and beauty to an already energetic production. The film covers four skating competitions, and while Tonya Harding may have achieved the elusive triple axel in real life — one of the few women in her lifetime to do so — Margot Robbie could not master the difficult move even after intense preparation. Some of the first scenes to be shot for the film, Robbie was required in the skating sequences to create an approximation of figure skating, including the triple axel. The rest was left to movie magic.

Robbie had played ice hockey as a teenager, but had never figure skated. Nothing could prepare her for the rigors of taking to the ice — and creating elegance in her movements on the level of Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan. "You wear six inches of padding for ice hockey, so I thought figure skating would be a breeze," says Robbie. "I'm quick on the ice and thought I could pick it up easily. But figure skates are different from ice hockey skates — there's a toe pick for one thing. So I was tripping all the time. Without padding, it's excruciating each time you hit the ice."

She worked with Japanese-Canadian coach and former figure skater Sarah Kawahara, who choreographed some of Nancy Kerrigan's moves during her heyday. "Figure skating is a lot like ballet, only it's brutal and requires no small amount of athleticism and strength," says Robbie. "The whole idea is to make it look effortless and graceful. I have a world of respect for anyone who can figure-skate — it's incredibly hard and surprisingly cruel. Also, picking up something like that at age 26 is not the same as learning it at five years old, like Tonya did, when you have no fear and you're falling from three feet off the ground as opposed to six."

Another logistical challenge in filming the skating scenes involved film equipment. Director Craig Gillespie wanted to be out on the ice with Robbie as much as possible during her competition sequences, but the bigger

equipment couldn't be dragged into the rink. Because the production shot on celluloid film, digital cameras were not an option.
Fortunately camera operator Dana Morris knew how to skate, and could operate equipment on the ice.

Producers scoured the country for female stunt doubles who could stand in for Robbie during some of the more demanding moves, including the triple axel, but only two female skaters in America can currently achieve the move, and they were too short. Male skaters in wigs were also considered as stand-ins, but ultimately the production settled for female figure-skating pros who could *almost* perform the triple axel — the rest was handled with visual effects. Robbie began the complicated move, the stunt doubles continued it, and digital effects enhanced what Harding pulled off gracefully at the peak of her career in rinks around the world. "It wasn't until we cast our stunt doubles that I really understood the gravity of what Tonya could do," says Robbie. "Sports have progressed in the last two decades, but the triple axel is still this crazy thing that very few people can pull off."

## BRINGING ALIVE THE '80S AND '90S

While hardly the distant past, the late '80s and early '90s, when much of I, TONYA unfurls, is a very particular era in terms of its style and culture, requiring period elements and costumes for a screenplay containing 250 scenes and 90 costume changes. Big hair, acid-wash denim and grunge-era fashions prevail — including the homegrown rabbit fur coat worn by Harding in early scenes — in a story set primarily in the Pacific Northwest. "This is a '90s movie, and having been born in 1986, it was so cool to see all the retro culture, with its color palette of sad turquoises and loud yellows," says Paul Walter Hauser. "All the stonewash jeans and puffy coats made everyone look like third graders heading to recess."

But the story includes several competition scenes outside of Portland, including one at the 1994 Olympic Game in Lillehammer, Norway, requiring a meticulous commitment to visual authenticity courtesy of production designer Jade Healy, costume designer Jennifer Johnson and art director Andi Crumbley, who ensured that every prop, clothing article, sign or logotype was era-appropriate, a considerable challenge in crowd scenes featuring hundred of extras.

Each of the main characters underwent meticulous physical transformations that made them appear like products of the age. Sebastian Stan had to grow comfortable wearing the mustache that became Gillooly's defining feature; Robbie grappled with the demands of teased-out, over-processed hair and the cheap, often homemade figure skating outfits Harding was criticized for beginning early in her career, when she was pressured to look perfect on the ice despite living in poverty. Hauser had his hair thinned out and shaved on the sides to mimic alopecia, in keeping with his character's slovenly, unkempt demeanor. Janney — who likens LaVona Golden's inimitable personal style to "early Prada," with its luxurious, aspirational textures and colors, settled right into her look: "I just stepped into those clothes and they felt like armor along with the cigarettes and the parakeet on my shoulder."

## CAST AND FILMMAKER BIOS:

### CAST

**Margot Robbie** (Producer, Tonya Harding) is a talented actress who has captivated global audiences with breakout performances alongside some of the most notable names in film. Continually evolving her diverse body of work, Robbie brings gripping narratives to life in coveted roles that speak to her powerful on-screen presence.

Robbie currently stars in Simon Curtis' *Goodbye Christopher Robin* alongside Domhnall Gleeson. The film tells the story of Winnie the Pooh creator A.A. Milne (Gleeson) and his wife, Daphne (Robbie). FOX Searchlight released the film on October 13, 2017.

In addition, Robbie stars in *I, Tonya*, as the titled character, Tonya Harding. She also served as a producer on the film under her production company, LuckyChap Entertainment. The film tells the controversial story of Olympic figure skater, Tonya Harding, who infamously conspired to have her competition, Nancy Kerrigan, injured before the 1994 Winter Olympics. Craig Gillespie directs the screenplay by Steven Rogers. The film premiered at the 2017 Toronto International Film Festival and will be released by Neon December 8, 2017.

Robbie is currently in production on Miles Joris-Peyrafitte's 1930s Dust Bowl drama *Dreamland*, which her production company LuckyChap Entertainment produced along with Automatik. Robbie stars in the film, which follows a 15-year-old boy who beats out the FBI and local police to find and capture a fugitive bank robber (Robbie), only to learn that she's far more than what authorities claim her to be.

She recently wrapped production on Josie Rourke's *Mary Queen of Scots* where she stars as Queen Elizabeth opposite Saoirse Ronan as Mary Stuart. The Focus Features project will take on the historic rivalry between cousins Elizabeth and Mary, when the latter attempted to overthrow Elizabeth's seat on the English throne. She will also lend her voice to Sony Pictures' live

action/animation hybrid, *Peter Rabbit*, which will be released February 9, 2018.

Robbie has numerous film and television development projects under her LuckyChap Entertainment banner, all of which correspond to her objective of telling stories with strong female characters, the four most-notable being: *Bad Monkeys*, *Fierce Kingdom*, *Marian* and *The Paper Bag Princess.*

*Bad Monkeys*, based on Matt Ruff's novel of the same name, centers around Jane Charlotte, who lands herself in the Las Vegas Clark County Detention Center after she is arrested for murder. Jane claims she works for a secret organization, the Department for the Final Disposition of Irredeemable Persons, also known as "Bad Monkeys." Universal Pictures optioned the rights to the psychological thriller to be adapted by Dylan Clark, with Robbie as a producer and Josey McNamara as executive producer.

LuckyChap Entertainment is producing *Fierce Kingdom* alongside Warner Bros. and Di Novi Pictures. The film, based on the Gin Phillips thriller novel, *Beautiful Things*, focuses on a mother and son trapped in a zoo with a gunman on the loose.

Additionally, LuckyChap will produce *Marian* alongside Donald De Line and Amy Pascal. Robbie is set to star as "Maid Marian," who picks up the cause to lead her people into a pivotal war after the love of her life, Robin Hood, dies.

Finally, LuckChap is producing *The Paper Bag Princess* alongside Elizabeth Banks' Brownstone Productions, Bryan Unkeless' Clubhouse Pictures and Dan Krech. Universal Pictures has optioned the rights to the bestselling children's book of the same name.

Last summer, Robbie appeared in Warner Bros' *Suicide Squad*, playing the coveted role of "Harley Quinn" opposite Jared Leto, Will Smith, and Viola Davis. Robbie's portrayal of Quinn is the first time the villainous, fan-favorite, comic book character was revealed on the big screen. The film, directed by David Ayer, was released August 5, 2016 and currently ranks 9$^{th}$

in 2016 worldwide gross box office with more than $745,600,000 million. Robbie also portrayed the legendary classic character “Jane Porter” in David Yates’ *The Legend of Tarzan*, opposite Alexander Skarsgård, Samuel L. Jackson, and Christoph Waltz. The action-adventure Warner Bros film was released on July 1, 2016 and grossed more than $356,700,000 million worldwide.

Robbie is perhaps best known for her breakout role in Martin Scorsese’s *The Wolf of Wall Street* in which she stars as the female lead opposite Leonardo DiCaprio. Based on the memoir of the same name by Jordan Belfort, the film tells the story of a New York penny stockbroker (DiCaprio) who served 20 months in prison for refusing to cooperate in a large securities fraud case involving corruption on Wall Street, the corporate banking world, and mob infiltration. Starring as DiCaprio’s wife in the film, Robbie is joined by an all-star cast of actors including Matthew McConaughey, Jonah Hill, Rob Reiner, Jean Dujardin, Jon Favreau and Kyle Chandler.

Additional film credits include: Paramount’s *Whiskey Tango Foxtrot* opposite Tina Fey; Roadside Attraction’s *Z for Zachariah* opposite Chiwetel Ejiofor and Chris Pine*;* Warner Bros’ *Focus*, opposite Will Smith; *Suite Française* alongside Michelle Williams, Kristen Scott Thomas and Matthias Schoenaerts; and *About Time* opposite Rachel McAdams and Domhnall Gleeson.

Robbie made her U.S. debut in the critically acclaimed ABC series, *Pan Am*, in 2011. The period drama depicted the lives of the pilots and stewardesses who once made Pan Am the most glamorous way to fly. Robbie starred as “Laura,” a runaway bride, who fled a life of domestic boredom to take to the skies. The series was created by Jack Orman (*ER, Men of a Certain Age*), and also starred Christina Ricci.

In Australia, Robbie is most recognized for her role as “Donna Freedman” on the television soap opera *Neighbours* which chronicled the lives of the residents of Ramsay Street in the fictional Australian suburb of Erinsborough. Her role garnered her two Logie Award nominations for Most Popular New Female Talent and Most Popular Actress.

Born in Australia, Robbie grew up on the Gold Coast and eventually moved to Melbourne where she began acting professionally at the age of 17. She currently resides in Los Angeles.

**Sebastian Stan** (Jeff Gillooly) can be seen reprising his role as Bucky Barnes, a.k.a. The Winter Soldier, in Marvel's smash hit *Captain America: Civil War*. He was most recently seen in Sony's *The Bronze* (dir. Bryan Buckley) and 20th Century Fox's Golden Globe-winning *The Martian*, directed by Ridley Scott and opposite Matt Damon and Jessica Chastain. Last year he appeared in *Ricki and the Flash* opposite Meryl Streep and reprised his role as Bucky Barnes in Marvel's *Captain America: The Winter Soldier,* the sequel to the 2011 film *Captain America: The First Avenger*.
Up next, Stan will be seen opposite J.K. Simmons in *I'm Not Here*, alongside Mandy Moore and Max Greenfield. Recently, he wrapped *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, directed by Stacie Passon, and Steven Soderbergh's *Lucky Logan*, opposite Adam Driver and Daniel Craig.

Stan played opposite Natalie Portman and Mila Kunis in Darren Aronofsky's *Black Swan*. Other film credits include *Rachel Getting Married* with Anne Hathaway; *Spread* with Ashton Kutcher; *The Apparition*, from Warner Bros. and producer Joel Silver; *Gone* with Amanda Seyfried; *Hot Tub Time Machine* with John Cusack and Chevy Chase; Fred Durst's *The Education of Charlie Banks*; *The Architecht* with Anthony LaPaglia, Isabella Rossellini and Hayden Panettiere; and Screen Gem's *The Covenant*.

On television, Stan is well-known for his recurring role as Carter Baizen on the hit television series "Gossip Girl." He also starred as TJ Hammond opposite Sigourney Weaver in USA Network's "Political Animals" and Prince Jack Benjamin in the NBC drama "Kings," alongside Ian McShane. Stan appeared in season 1 of ABC's hit series "Once Upon a Time" as fan-favorite the Mad Hatter.

In 2007, Stan made his Broadway debut opposite Liev Schreiber in Eric Bogosian's *Talk Radio*. During the Roundabout Theater Company's 2013 season, Stan returned to the Broadway stage in *Picnic*, directed by Sam Gold.

Stan currently resides in New York.

**Allison Janney** (LaVona Golden) has taken her place among a select group of actors who combine a leading lady's profile with a character actor's art of performance. Currently starring alongside Anna Faris in the CBS/Chuck Lorre sitcom, "Mom," Janney also received rave reviews for her turn as Margaret Scully on Showtime's groundbreaking drama "Masters of Sex." Janney won Emmys for both roles in the same year; a rare feat in Emmy history. She won a second Emmy for "Mom" the following year, bringing her total number of ATAS statues to seven. She was also recently honored with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. In addition, Janney has continually taken on movie roles during her hiatus weeks from the sitcom. Recently released movies include *Tallulah*, which reunited her with Ellen Page, *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* marked her first time working with director Tim Burton and *The Girl On the Train* saw her collaborating again with longtime friend, director Tate Taylor. Janney also appeared in two of the previous summer's biggest box office titles: the adorably animated *Minions* and *Spy* with Melissa McCarthy. Prior feature work includes *The Duff*, Jason Bateman's directorial debut *Bad Words*, the Dreamworks' animated film *Mr. Peabody & Sherman*, and *The Way, Way Back* with Steve Carell and Toni Collette.

Additionally she co-starred in the much-anticipated feature film *The Help* based on the best-selling novel of the same name. For their extraordinary performances, the cast won Ensemble awards from the Screen Actors Guild, National Board of Review and the Broadcast Film Critics. The film was also nominated for an Academy Award for Best Picture. Janney has also delighted audiences with outstanding performances in the Oscar-winning ensemble hit *Juno* and in the movie version of the Tony Award winning play *Hairspray*. She was nominated for Best Supporting Actress by the Independent Spirit Awards for her role in Todd Solondz's film *Life During Wartime*. She also appeared in Sam Mendes' *Away We Go*, the comedy *Strangers with Candy*, and was heard as the voice of Gladys in Dreamworks' animated film *Over the Hedge* as well as Peach in *Finding Nemo*.

She received another Spirit Award nomination for her work in the independent feature *Our Very Own*, and starred opposite Meryl Streep in *The Hours*, which received a SAG Award nomination for Outstanding Ensemble Cast in a Motion Picture. Other feature credits include the Academy Award winning film *American Beauty* (for which she won a SAG

Award for Outstanding Ensemble Cast in a Motion Picture) as well as *Nurse Betty*, *How to Deal*, *Drop Dead Gorgeous*, *10 Things I Hate About You*, *Primary Colors*, *The Ice Storm*, *Six Days Seven Nights*, *The Object of My Affection,* and *Big Night*.

Throughout her career Janney has made a handful of memorable guest-star appearances on television, but she is renowned for her starring role in the acclaimed NBC series "The West Wing," where she won a remarkable four Emmy Awards and four SAG Awards for her portrayal of White House Press Secretary CJ Cregg.

While a freshman studying acting at Kenyon College in Ohio, Janney auditioned for a play that Paul Newman was directing and got the part. Soon after, Newman and his wife Joanne Woodward suggested she study at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York. She followed their advice and went on to make her Broadway debut in Noel Coward's "Present Laughter" for which she earned the Outer Critics Circle Award and Clarence Derwent Award. She also appeared in Arthur Miller's "A View from the Bridge," receiving her first Tony Award nomination and winning the Outer Critics Circle Award as well as the musical "9 to 5," for which she earned a Tony nomination and won the Drama Desk Award. Janney made her return to Broadway earlier this year in the revival of John Guare's "Six Degrees of Separation" taking on the title role of Ouisa alongside John Benjamin Hickey and Corey Hawkins.

**Julianne Nicholson** (Diane Rawlinson) is once again working with writer/producer Dick Wolf; currently appearing in his latest NBC project, "Law & Order True Crime: the Menendez Murders." Earlier she starred in USA Network's "Eyewitness," based on the critically acclaimed Norwegian drama. The program was recognized with a GLAAD Award for Outstanding Limited Series.

Upcoming films include *Who We Are Now*, reuniting her with writer/director Matthew Newton (*From Nowhere*) and Maggie Betts' *Novitiate*, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival.

Previously Nicholson co-starred in *Black Mass* for Warner Bros. and in John Wells' *August: Osage County*. The ensemble cast won the Hollywood Film Award for Best Ensemble and was nominated for a SAG and Critics' Choice Award in the same category.

Further television credits for Nicholson include starring with Jason Momoa in the original scripted series "The Red Road" for the Sundance Channel. She also guest starred in multi season arcs on both Showtime's "Masters of Sex" and HBO's "Boardwalk Empire." She first worked with Wells on the medical drama "Presidio Med," which he produced. Her other series commitments include Wolf's "Conviction" and "Law and Order: Criminal Intent," Steven Spielberg's paranormal drama "The Others," and David E. Kelly's "Ally McBeal."

Her stage work includes a role she originated in Sam Shepard's play *Heartless*, Melissa James Gibson's new play *This*, and Rattlestick's production of Adam Rapp's *Hallway* trilogy.

**Paul Walter Hauser** (Shawn Eckardt) will next be seen in the lead role of 'Shawn Eckardt' in the NEON feature film directed by Craig Gillespie I, TONYA starring opposite Margot Robbie, Sebastian Stan & Allison Janney, which just premiered at this year's T.I.F.F. and has been receiving rave reviews.

He previously recurred on the DirecTV critically acclaimed drama KINGDOM for the Audience Network in the role of 'Keith' opposite Frank Grillo & Jonathan Tucker. His other television credits include recurring roles on KEY & PEELE and Amazon's BETAS and has appeared on SUPERSTORE, BLUNT TALK, IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY IN PHILADELPHIA and COMMUNITY.

In the feature world he's starred in Dustin Lance Black's VIRGINIA opposite Ed Harris and Jennifer Connelly, QUAD opposite Aaron Paul, and DEMOTED. He will next be seen in the 2017 release of the cult sequel SUPER TROOPERS 2 as the Canadian Mountie version of Kevin Heffernan's "Farva".

**FILMMAKERS**

**Craig Gillespie** (Director) is a critically acclaimed feature, TV and commercial director who is recognized for his sharp, offbeat comedy and ability to inspire honest performances.

Walking a tightrope between the comedic and the mundane, Gillespie brings a unique tonality to his projects across all filmed media. Craig's features have grossed over $170 million at the box office, and have included collaborations with Ryan Gosling, Colin Farrell, Chris Pine, Casey Affleck, Jon Hamm, Toni Collette, and Margot Robbie.

In 2016, Gillespie directed *The Finest Hours*. Based on Casey Sherman and Michael J. Tougias' book detailing a Coast Guard rescue in 1952, the film stars Chris Pine, Casey Affleck, Ben Foster, Holliday Grainger, John Ortiz, and Eric Bana.

In 2014, Gillespie helmed Disney's *Million Dollar Arm*, which features Jon Hamm as a sports agent that recruits talented Indian cricket players to play Major League Ball. In 2011, Craig directed a remake of *Fright Night*, the 1985 cult comedy-horror classic. WGA Award-winning writer Marti Noxon's rendition stars Anton Yelchin and Colin Farrell, and earned high praise from discriminating cult followers and critics alike.

Craig Gillespie made his foray into feature directing with the critically acclaimed *Lars and the Real Girl*, starring Oscar-nominee, Ryan Gosling. Hailed by The Los Angeles Times as an "implausible feat of sustained imagination," and The Wall Street Journal as "an almost perfect movie with flawless performances," Nancy Oliver's screenplay was nominated for an Oscar, while Gillespie's film won numerous critics' awards and festival prizes.

Gillespie served as producer and director of the Showtime series "The United States of Tara," directing the pilot episode that helped actress Toni Collette earn an Emmy and a Golden Globe. Penned by Oscar-winning *Juno* scribe Diablo Cody, the show bears Gillespie's unmistakable stamp of dancing on the boundary between comedy and drama, while maintaining a clear directorial presence.

For his strong and singular body of commercial work, Gillespie has been honored with some of the most prestigious accolades, including many awards from the Clios, LIAA, D&AD, One Shows, Effies, Addys, statues in Cannes, the DGA award, and an Emmy.

**Steven Rogers** (Writer/Producer) wrote the script for *I, Tonya*, which made the 2016 Blacklist and won the 2016 Hit List. He is also a producer on the film. Previous credits include *Hope Floats, Stepmom*, *Kate and Leopold*, *P. S. I Love You* and *Love the Coopers*, which he also executive produced.

**Tom Ackerley** (Producer) formed LuckyChap Entertainment with Margot Robbie and Josey McNamara at the start of 2015, with a mandate to tell stories with strong female characters. In the two years since they began working together, they have had produced two features and have many more in active development. The first to be released, *I, Tonya*, premiered in competition at the Toronto Film Festival; *Terminal* is scheduled to be released worldwide in 2017. Tom is currently in development on *Fierce Kingdom* with Warner Brothers, as well as *Dangerous Odds* written by Andrea Berloff; LuckyChap will soon begin production on *Dreamland*.

**Bryan Unkeless** (Producer) founded Clubhouse Pictures in 2015. Unkeless is currently in post-production on the high-profile actioner *Bright* directed by David Ayer (*Suicide Squad, End of Watch*) starring Will Smith and Joel Edgerton. *Bright* sold to Netflix in a landmark $90 million-dollar deal in early 2016. He is also in post-production on Netflix's *First Match*, the directorial debut for Sundance labs standout Olivia Newman.

Prior to starting Clubhouse Pictures, Unkeless spearheaded development and co- produced the record-setting phenomenon *The Hunger Games* series, directed by Gary Ross (*Seabiscuit, Pleasantville*) and Francis Lawrence (*I Am Legend, Water for Elephants*), starring Oscar winner Jennifer Lawrence. He also actively developed the first three films in the hugely popular *Diary of a Wimpy Kid* franchise, the adaptation of David Nicholls' best-selling book *One Day*, and the Emmy-winning FX limited series "The People vs. OJ Simpson." In addition, he put into development the upcoming *Where'd You Go, Bernadette?*, based on the best-selling book with Oscar nominee Richard Linklater (*Before Sunrise, Boyhood*) attached to direct; *Crazy Rich Asians*, with director Jon Chu (*Now You See Me 2*), and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Goldfinch*, to be directed by John Crowley.